Nectarinia jugularis proselia (Oberholser)
(Car Nicobar)

They are like *klossi* but definitely with a shorter bill and very distinctly bright orange-yellow pectoral tufts.

Sálim Ali and Ripley (HANDBOOK Vol. 10, pp. 30-33, 1974) have placed the three forms from the Andaman, Car Nicobar and Nicobar Islands as subspecies of *Nectarinia jugularis*. Baker (FAUNA Vol. 3, pp. 401-404, 1926) considered the birds from Andamans (*andamanica*) to be quite different from those in other islands (of the same group) and placed it in a separate species, *Leptocoma flammaxillaris* together with birds from Myanmar (Burma), with whom they have greater affinity, as the nominate race. This is a more correct classification, considering the fact that these birds (Andaman) have a very large bill, the males have a non-breeding (eclipse) plumage (no. 22119 from Wrightmyo in our collection) as in *asiatica*, and a brown band just below the metallic throat and breast of the breeding male. The abdomen is pale yellow, while in others it is very bright yellow. The pectoral tufts are yellow in *andamanica* contrary to the bright orange in the other two subspecies. The forehead is plain light brown whereas it is glossy metallic in *proselia* and *klossi*. The only specimen we have of the *flammaxillaris* is a breeding male from Ingabu, Henzada Dt., Myanmar (Burma), dated 8.1.1931. The bright orange and black breast band has faded into light orange and dark brown. Specimens of *andamanica* resemble this bird in every respect but lack the orange and black (brown) breast band, instead of which there is a brown one. The pectoral tuft is bright orange and yellow in *flammaxillaris* whereas it is yellow, with no orange in *andamanica*. Baker mentions the presence of an eclipse plumage in *flammaxillaris* also.

Speciation is an extremely slow process. According to Mayr (1942, Systematics and the origin of species), birds with their highly uniform internal environment exhibit a minimum of changeability through external causes. The variation of the phenotype in birds is exceedingly narrow. Or it may be that the environment in the different islands are similar and hence the evolution has taken up almost the same pattern, without any drastic difference. Still the difference in the sizes of the bills of the birds from various islands and the small differences in the colour of the pectoral tufts are noteworthy. It was formerly believed that insular forms are invariably smaller than the mainland forms, this is by no means true. The only generalization we can make is that island forms are often different in size from the other population of the species.

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19. SIGHT RECORD OF GREEN MUNIA *AMANDAVA FORMOSA* IN THE DESERT NATIONAL PARK, JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN

The Green Munia *Amandava formosa* (Latham) is a rare endemic species, very locally and unevenly distributed, mainly in Central India from Mount Abu, Gwalior, Jhansi, Surguja south to Mahableshwar, Utnur (Adilabad) and Visakhapatnam Ghats (Ali and Ripley 1983). Stray records are reported from Lucknow (Reid 1881), Bihar and Lahore (Currie 1916a, b). Currie (1916a, b) found a small breeding colony consisting of 4-5 nests in August 1914 in some ornamental trees in the municipal gardens in Lahore, which H. Whistler presumed were escaped cage birds (Roberts 1991). There has been no record since then, so Roberts (1992) has excluded it from the checklist of Pakistan.

On 24 July 1993, I saw an individual sitting

on a *Capparis* bush inside Sudasari enclosure in the Desert National Park in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan. The nearest known area (Mt. Abu) is about 400 km from Sudasari. According to Ali and Ripley (1983), the Green Munia is found in grass and low bushes, tall grasslands, sugarcane fields, and boulder-strewn scrub jungle. The Sudasari enclosure, where we saw one bird, has up to 1 m tall grasses, thanks to good protection during the last 10 years.

Suresh C. Sharma (*in litt.* 1993) has seen it on 29 and 31 March 1991 in the Taal Chapper Wildlife Sanctuary in Churu district of the Thar desert, which is around 400 km northwest of Gwalior district from where this species was reported earlier. Incidentally, during my 6 years of studies on the Great Indian Bustard *Ardeotis nigriceps* and other birds (*see* Rahmani 1991) in the Karera Bustard Sanctuary in Shivpuri district, and extensive surveys of Gwalior and Shivpuri districts, I did not encounter this species anywhere.

What could be the reason for the sighting of this species in two widely separated areas in the Thar desert? Despite its rarity, the Green Munia is caught for pet trade (Rajat Bhargave, pers. comm. 1994). These recent sightings could have been of escaped caged birds. The Taal Chapper Sanctuary adjoins the village of the same name, so Sharma's sightings could have been from escaped birds but Sudasari is very remote and it is about 65 km from Jaisalmer and I have never seen cage birds being sold in Jaisalmer. The monsoon of 1993 was very good, and during our visit in July, the vegetation was lush green, so most likely, these munias spread out in the desert to avail of the temporary abundance of food and shelter.

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20. SOME NOTES ON THE BIRDS OF BHUTAN

During my stay in Bhutan from March 1989 till May 1994 I did some birdwatching in my spare time. Most of my observations were in accordance with the information given in the HANDBOOK OF THE BIRDS OF INDIA AND PAKISTAN by Sálim Ali and S. Dillon Ripley. However, on several occasions I noted differences or additional information. This paper is written in order to share these observations with others. I will also add some notes that need further investigations, e.g. because the subspecies is uncertain. The sequence of the species will be the same as in the HANDBOOK.

1. **Ruddy Shelduck** (*Tadorna ferruginea*): A pair of this species was observed by me on Gagomo Tso near the Yalela (pass) just south-east of Lhingshi, in the north-western part of the country at an altitude of 4600 m, on May 14, 1993. Although I did not observe a nest, local people told me that ducks were breeding at another lake near Lhingshi. The presence of a pair of these ducks on a location similar to their normal breeding grounds suggests that this species could be breeding in Bhutan as well.

2. *Buzzard* species, probably **Upland Buzzard** (*Buteo hemilasius*): Three Buzzards were seen by me on May 12, 1993 in Lhingshi at an altitude of 4100 m. One gave an aerial display with the typical